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LARSON ASKS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN TO HALT FUNDING OF JSF EXTRA ENGINE IN CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Washington D.C. - Last Friday, U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) continued his fight to end the funding of the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) extra engine program. Congressman Larson wrote letters to Rep. David Obey (WI), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and Rep. Norm Dicks (WA), Chairman of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, asking that they add language to a Continuing Resolution (CR) providing the Secretary of Defense “flexibility” in whether to fund the Joint Strike Fighter Alternate Engine program.

This action would guard against a potential veto of the CR by President Obama, who along with Secretary Gates considers the program to be wasteful spending, and ensure that the government is not shut down.

In the letters to Chairmen Obey and Dicks, Congressman Larson stated, ***“If Congress were to send a long-term [Continuing Resolution] to the President without flexibility on the Alternate Engine, we would in effect be continuing the program for another fiscal year in direct conflict with the President’s position. We cannot and should not hold the entire budgetary process hostage for this unnecessary program.”***

Congressman Larson added, “Each time we fund the Alternate Engine program, we are taking funding from programs critical to assisting the individuals and families struggling to make it during today’s tough economic times.”

[Earlier this year, in response to a letter written to him by Congressman Larson,](#) Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that the JSF extra engines are “unaffordable luxuries” and that he “firmly believe(s) that the interests of the taxpayers, our military, and the JSF program are best served by not pursuing an extra engine.”

The Joint Strike Fighter extra engine program is the poster child of excessive, unnecessary spending. Congressman Larson has long fought against the funding of it, a program which the President and Secretary Gates have vehemently opposed and that the Marines, the Navy, and the Air Force have said they don't want or need.

December 3, 2010

The Honorable Norm Dicks

Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense

H-405, The Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks:

As you compile a long-term Continuing Resolution (CR), I write to request that you include

language that provides the Secretary of Defense with flexibility in funding the Joint Strike Fighter Alternate Engine program. Inclusion of this language would guard against a potential veto by President Obama and ensure that the government is not shut down.

President Obama and Secretary of Defense Gates have consistently stated their opposition to continuing the Joint Strike Fighter Alternate Engine program. In fact, on May 28, 2010 President Obama vowed to veto any legislation that would fund a second engine for the Joint Strike Fighter program. If Congress were to send a long-term CR to the President without flexibility on the Alternate Engine, we would in effect be continuing the program for another fiscal year in direct conflict with the President's position. We cannot and should not hold the entire budgetary process hostage for this unnecessary program.

Furthermore, each time we fund the Alternate Engine program, we are taking funding from programs critical to assisting the individuals and families struggling to make it during today's tough economic times. All across our nation, individuals are out of work, families are seeing their homes taken from them through foreclosure, and soon millions will no longer have access to unemployment benefits. Can we as Democrats look these men and women in the eye and explain that despite all of the data and reports that said otherwise, spending \$3 billion on an extra engine for the Joint Strike Fighter was the right thing to do? This program represents wasteful federal spending that must be ended if we are to get our fiscal house in order without further cutting programs that mean so much to us as Democrats.

Mr. Chairman, I know that you fully understand all of the arguments that have been made both for and against the Alternate Engine, and I thank you for your vote against the program earlier this year. I am deeply committed to ending this program and hope that we can continue this discussion in the coming days.

Sincerely,

JOHN B. LARSON

Member of Congress

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